

most important contributions that had of late years been made to Natural History, both in a scientific and commercial point of view.

## BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH.

This Society met on the evening of the 14th November, in the Royal Institution.—Dr. R. K. Greville in the Chair.

A letter from the Marquis of Normanby was read, stating that the Diploma of the Society had been laid before the Queen, and that the same had been very graciously received by Her Majesty. A letter was also read from Baron Werther, inclosing a communication from the King of Prussia, in which His Majesty was graciously pleased to acknowledge the receipt of the Society's Diploma, transmitted on the occasion of His Majesty's election as an honorary member.

An account of botanical excursions made from Edinburgh in the autumn of 1839, was read by Professor Graham.

Mr. Forbes read a notice of excursions in the neighbourhood of Trieste\*, in which he gave a sketch of the Triestine territory, a country exceedingly rich in rare and curious plants. The excursions described were four:—1st, the immediate neighbourhood of the town; 2nd, the salt marshes of Zaule, and the neighbouring hills of Istria; 3rd, the Monte Spaccato and the wood of Lipizza, on the singular calcareous plain of the Karst; and 4th, Contobello on the sea coast.

Dr. Greville laid on the table a series of specimens of *Quercus robur*, exhibiting an extraordinary range of form. From the singular variation exhibited by these specimens in the shape and texture of the leaves, and in the length of the peduncles, Dr. Greville was of opinion that there is but one species of oak indigenous in Britain.

## ROYAL PHYSICAL SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH.

Of the communications read this Session to the Physical Society, we notice the following:—Edward Forbes, Esq. exhibited drawings and diagrams of the various genera of *Ciliograde Medusæ* inhabiting the seas of Britain, with comments on their structure and habits. He gave an account of two new species of *Alcinæ*—a genus observed this summer, for the first time, in the northern hemisphere; also, of a new *Beroë*, discovered near the Isle of May; and concluded with some interesting observations on the structure and use of cilia, which naturalists have generally supposed are for motion, but which Mr. Forbes showed could not be so.

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